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at the Harvard College Observatory, announcing that Mr. SLIPHER, at the Lowell Observatory, had discovered a comet by photography on November 29, 1905, in the position R. A. $22^h\ 44^m$; Decl. — 11° 18′. No data were given as to the rate or direction of motion; hence, in view of the time interval since its discovery, it did not seem worth while to search the sky for this object.

Professor PICKERING'S astronomical bulletin, received a week later, stated that "the comet was moving 4′ per hour in a direction 15° north of west." It would be interesting to know how this direction was determined, since a trail on a single photographic plate would leave it ambiguous.

Another astronomical bulletin, received on December 29th, stated that Professor LOWELL had discovered a second comet on the same photographic plate in the position R. A. $22^h\ 34^m$; Decl. —8°.7, just to the northwest of Σ 2935. This object was moving 2′ per hour in a direction south by west or north by east, and had two tails.

The discovery of a comet by photography is unusual enough to be noteworthy, but to find two on a single plate is a unique achievement. It is unfortunate that these discoveries could not be announced in time to be verified by visual observations. It might be suggested that photographic defects often look wonderfully like comet trails; but it is of course assumed that Professor LOWELL took precautions to guard against such deception before announcing the discoveries.

January, 1906. R. G. AITKEN.

COMET *a* 1906 (BROOKS).

The first comet of the year was discovered by BROOKS, of Geneva, New York, on the night of January 26th, in R. A. $16^h\ 19^m.5$, and Decl. +47° 10′. Observations were secured by the writer on the following three nights and an orbit was computed at the Students' Observatory by Dr. CRAWFORD and Mr. CHAMPREUX. The comet was found to be moving in a practically parabolic orbit. According to the ephemeris, it will pass within about 5° of the north pole on February 18th.

It is a fairly easy object in a 3-inch telescope on a dark night. The nucleus as seen in the 12-inch seems about equal in brightness to an eleventh-magnitude star. I have suspected the presence of a tail in position-angle about 300°.

James D. Maddrill.

Changes in the Personnel of the D. O. Mills Expedition to the Southern Hemisphere.

Dr. H. K. Palmer, Assistant in the D. O. Mills Observatory on Cerro San Cristobal, Santiago, Chile, returned to California in November. He left Santiago in September, after a residence of two years and six months there, and on the return journey made an extensive trip through the interior of northern Chile and the highlands of Peru, including a visit to the Harvard College Observatory at Arequipa. Dr. Palmer is at present engaged at Mt. Hamilton in measuring the spectrograms secured by the expedition.

Acting Astronomer Heber D. Curtis, accompanied by his family, sailed from San Francisco on December 30th, via Panama, to Chile, to take charge of the D. O. Mills Observatory for a period of five years. Their absence from Mt. Hamilton is a severe loss to the personal side of life here.

Mr. Mills has very generously provided also for extensive improvements in and additions to the equipment. The dome, formerly covered with heavy painted canvas, will be recovered with thick tin or with iron. A ball thrust bearing and two roller side bearings will be provided for the declination axis of the telescope. Apparatus for quick resilvering of the 37-inch mirror will be constructed. Telephone connection between the observatory on the summit and the astronomer's residence in the city will be made. A building will be constructed on the summit to accommodate a machine-shop equipped with lathe and small tools driven by electricity, and to contain rooms for the observers. Two-prism and one-prism spectrographs are under construction, in order that radial-velocity determinations may be carried to fainter stars. Professor Wright, in charge of the expedition in the past, has shown that certain rapid changes in focal length and other sources of disturbance in the stellar images are due to rapid changes of temperature in the mirror during the first hours of the night. The question of artificially maintaining the temperature of large mirrors during the daytime at the reading estimated for the atmos-